

Teaching with Primary Sources



Program Description

"Teaching with Primary Sources—No Ordinary Time: War, Resistance, and the Montana Experience" will bring Montana teachers together from across the state for a one-day TPS workshop, to be held in Missoula, Montana, in conjunction with the September 22-24, 2011, 38th Annual Montana History Conference (cosponsored by the Montana Historical Society, the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, the Montana Museum of Art and Culture, and the University of Montana).

The theme of this year's Montana History Conference is "No Ordinary Time: War, Resistance, and the Montana Experience." The Teaching with Primary Sources Workshop will focus on "Using Primary Sources to Teach about War and Resistance" and will introduce teachers to appropriate sources on the Library of Congress website as well as other Montana-specific primary sources (including material posted on the Montana Memory Project, the Montana Historical Society website, and the Montana Sedition Project website). Other panels held on days two and three of the conference will supplement the knowledge that teachers gain in the TPS workshop with presentations that will address the effects of military conflicts, from the Civil War through Vietnam, on Montana and her citizens. Participants will also have the opportunity to tour Fort Missoula—an important and well preserved historical site and (as such) a primary source in its own right.

After the September conference, program participants will be encouraged (but not required) to participate in TPS webinars and other ongoing discussions of ways to integrate primary sources into the classroom. They will use at least one primary source lesson (or incorporate primary sources into a lesson they already teach) and they will be asked to share what they have learned in their home schools—either by providing an in-service training and/or by introducing or expanding their school's participation in National History Day, a successful national program that is relatively new to Montana.

"A year-long, nonprofit education program dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of history in elementary and secondary schools," National History Day is a program that uses history to challenge students in grades 6-12 to improve their research, analytical, and communication skills. In groups or individually, students conduct research on topics related to a broad theme which changes annually. The search for primary and secondary sources leads students to libraries, archives, historical societies, and museums; many conduct oral history interviews. They then present their findings in research or creative papers, museum-style exhibits, original dramatic performances, or multimedia documentaries. (Taken from "Meeting

the Standards: NHD in Today's Classroom." More on National History Day is available here: <http://mhs.mt.gov/education/HistoryDay.asp>.)

In addition, program participants will be brought together to attend a follow-up meeting, held in conjunction with Montana's National History Day competition in Helena in April 2012 (the exact date has not yet been set). At the spring meeting, teachers will be asked to report on ways they have integrated primary sources into their classrooms and have the opportunity to learn from the experiences of their fellow teachers. They will also be asked either to bring students (to compete in National History Day) or to serve as judges for NHD student entries.